

CURRICULUM VITAE

Bo Stjerne Thomsen

Head of Educational Impact
LEGO Education

M.Sc.Eng. in Architecture & Design
Ph.D. in Performative Learning Environments
Visiting Scholar at MIT, Harvard, Tufts Univ.
Executive Education, IMD & CBS

Phone: +45 52159198
E-mail: bo@stjernethomsen.com
Twitter: @BoStjerne



Bo Stjerne Thomsen is the Head of Educational Impact in LEGO Education, leading the global impact, curriculum, and experience design team. He was previously the Vice-President, Chair of Learning through Play and the Global Head of Research, part of the executive leadership team in the LEGO Foundation, leading the international research, education, and impact agenda.

Bo Stjerne has led innovative programs across education in more than 25 countries, at some of the worlds most esteemed universities, being academic advisor to governments across more than 15 countries and multi-lateral organizations like WEF, OECD, WISE, UN, and corporate networks.

He has established academic rigor, governance principles and recruiting academic faculties, while being affiliated as researcher, educator, and advisor to universities like MIT, Harvard, Tufts, Cambridge, EPFL, DTU and Tsinghua University.

Originally an engineer and architect by training and with 10 years of international practice, he has more than 20 publications on innovative pedagogies, the role of technology and new forms of assessments, and how to reimagine education through a renewed look at the science of learning, creativity and play.

Experience:

2024 – present: Head of Educational Impact, LEGO Education

- Heading up the global impact team with the curriculum, efficacy and experience design teams at LEGO Education, seeking to impact student learning outcomes across science, technology, engineering and math with hands-on playful experiences.

2020/02 – 2023/12: Vice-President, Chair of Learning through Play, The LEGO Foundation

- Part of the LEGO Foundation Executive Leadership Team, one of the world's biggest education, cultural and humanitarian funders with an annual commitment between \$3- 400M, total assets of \$2B+ and reaching 30M+ children/year.
- Leading the science of learning agenda and working with partners to define outcomes and metrics to influence education systems, support unformal learning practices and drive impact on student motivation, skills and outcomes across more than 60 countries.
- Spokesperson on reimagining learning for the LEGO Brand long-term strategic vision, and advisor to multiple CEO's and owner family, working closely with Boards on strategy, leadership teams and high-level engagements with royal families, Prime Ministers, multi- lateral leaders and strategic partners.
- Defining measures and develop analytics instruments for venture investments and large- scale independent grants with emphasis on edtech, innovation and new assessments.
- Jury and advisor to various international competitions with ChangeX, Hundred, Real Play Coalition, Big Change, XPrize, Learning Assessments etc.
- Sr. Advisor to 20+ LEGO Group and LEGO Education business projects to stimulate growth, identify opportunities for impact and connect global expertise.
- Driving thought-leadership and publications to influence education, as representative and media influencer for the LEGO entities, speaker and facilitator at the World Economic Forum, OECD, UNGA, EdTechX, ASU-GSV, SxSW etc.

2021/08 – 2023/02: Vice-President, Chair of Learning through Play, USA

- Developed the \$100M USA country strategy with a focus on equity; recruited Country Director and led first education partnerships with government, university institutions, local implementation partners, foundations and venture funds.
- Visiting research fellow at Harvard and Tufts University on education, policy and teaching strategies to transform education and increase social impact.
- Led \$50M grants to science fellows, community organizations and longitudinal research studies across 4 US States.

2016/04 – 2020/02: Vice-President, Global Head of Research & Head of Centre, The LEGO Foundation

- Led strategic partnerships with 14+ international education institutions, collaborated with 500+ researchers and developers across various disciplines with a \$100M portfolio.
- Oversaw the research and evaluation team to support 15 initiatives across 30+ countries to change student outcomes and influence attitudes and behaviors to support social impact, reaching ~10M children/year.
- Established research and innovation centers at University of Cambridge, Tsinghua University, Design School Kolding, MIT and Harvard University by leading strategy, recruiting faculty, attract funding, develop fellowship programs etc.
- Established collaborations with governments across Ministries of Education, Social Development, Children and Culture in Americas, Africa, Europe, and Asia
- Founder of an international online learning community with more than 100 organizations and 2,000 committed individuals from 65+ different countries.
- Managed cross-disciplinary team of researchers, educators, designers, evaluators and policy advisors as a knowledge centre for research & implementation, providing consultancy and training for corporate development.
- Supported international research, market studies and organizational transformation with partners like Foundation Strategy Group, McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group and ReD.

2013/04 - 2016/04: Director, Research & Learning, The LEGO Foundation

- Leading a global network of 200+ researchers, research labs on three different continents, a research, design and education team across Denmark and US and lead author for international reports on creativity and learning.

2011/02 – 2013/04: Head of LEGO Learning Institute, The LEGO Group

- Leading the LEGO Learning Institute and heading up partnerships and academic programs to support employee corporate training, LEGO Education solutions and LEGO Group front-end development, to establish the cross-organizational and science-based understanding of children's development, creativity, play and learning.

2009/06 – 2011/01: Robot Designer, Danish Technological Institute

- Leading a new focus area on the intersection between advanced robotics solutions, health care, education and culture, including European partnerships focused on technology transfer.

2001/11 - 2009/06: Founder and Executive Director, Novosion Aps

- Co-owner of design and consultancy business within architecture, engineering, art and urban design projects, across US, Mexico, China, Austria and Denmark.

2002/08 – 2009/06: Architecture & Engineering Consultant, Coop Himmelb(l)au

- Leading the initial concept and design development of an international concert hall and university department and project manager of the client, architect, and entrepreneur relationships,

2004/08 – 2006/03: Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture & Design, Aalborg University

- Teaching design thinking, the use of advanced 3D modeling and engineering simulations at the Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design degree. Student advisor and developing a new degree in Arts and Engineering.

Education:

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| 2015/04 – 2015/09 | Building on Talent Leadership Development, IMD Business School |
| 2011/11 – 2012/03 | Research Management, SIMI Executive, Copenhagen Business School |
| 2006/03 - 2009/06: | Ph.D. in Performative Environments, Aalborg University |
| 1999/09 – 2004/09 | Master of Science in Architecture and Design, Aalborg University |

Affiliations:

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| 2022/06 – | Strategic Advisory Board, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland |
| 2021/03 – | Advisory Board, Area9 Lyceum |
| 2021/08 – 2022/12: | Visiting Scholar, Education Policy and Pedagogy, Harvard University, GSD |
| 2021/08 – 2023/06: | Visiting Scholar, Engineering Education, Tufts University, CEEO |
| 2021/06 – 2023/12: | Leader in cross-sector group, Catalyzing Education 4.0, World Economic Forum |
| 2018/06 – 2023/12: | Steering Group, 'Børneriget', Children' Hospital Denmark |
| 2016/04 – 2020/02: | Steering Committee, Lifelong Learning Lab, Tsinghua University, China |
| 2015/06 – 2023/12: | Advisory Board, PEDAL Centre, University of Cambridge, UK |
| 2014/06 – 2020/06: | Steering Committee, Design for Play, Design School Kolding, Denmark |
| 2007/08 – 2008/06 | Research Fellow, Elite Researcher, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston |

Selected publications:

Andersson, L., & Thomsen, B. S. (2008). Performative Experiments and Cultural Re-Planning: Recapturing the Spectacle of the City. *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research*, 20(1), 39-51.

https://vbn.aau.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/16287042/Lasse_Andersson_Bo_Stjerne_Thomsen_20.pdf

Byrne, E., Jensen, H., Thomsen, B.S., Ramchandani, P. (2023). Educational interventions involving physical manipulatives for improving children's learning and development: A scoping review. *Review of Education*. 11. 10.1002/rev3.3400. <https://bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/rev3.3400>

Dodd, H. and Thomsen, B.S. (2023). The Serious Business of Play, page 247 in Morgan, F., Costello, E. and Gilbert, I. (2023). *Square Pegs: Inclusivity, compassion and fitting in – a guide for schools*. <https://www.crownhouse.co.uk/square-pegs>

Dowd, Amy Jo & Thomsen, Bo. (2021). Learning through Play : Increasing impact, Reducing inequality. <https://www.legofoundation.com/en/learn-how/knowledge-base/learning-through-play-increasing-impact-reducing-inequality/>

Gauntlett, D. & Thomsen B.S. (2013). *Cultures of Creativity*. The LEGO Foundation. <https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/item/8yzw8/cultures-of-creativity>

Gauntlett, D., Ackermann, E., Whitebread, D., Wolbers, T., Weckstrom, C. & Thomsen, B.S. (2012). The Future of Learning. The LEGO Foundation.

Gray, J. and Thomsen, B.S. (2021). The Educational Power of Digital Creations. The LEGO Foundation.
https://cms.learningthroughplay.com/media/ny5ndvdq/learning-through-digital-play_full-report.pdf

Jensen, O.B., Thomsen, B.S. (2008) Frank & Timme. Performative urban environments: Increasing media connectivity. *Mediacity: Situations, Practices and Encounters*, page 407-429.

Marsh, J., Murriss, K., Ng'ambi, D., Scott, F., Thomsen, B.S., Bannister, C., Bishop, J., Dixon, K., Giorza, T., Hetherington, A., Peers, J., Titus, S., Da Silva, H., Driscoll, A., Hall, L., Krönke, M., Margary, T. & Woodgate, A. (2020). *Children, Technology and Play*. The LEGO Foundation. ISBN: 978-87-999589-7-9. https://cms.learningthroughplay.com/media/rkzfgydz/children-tech-and-play_full-report.pdf

Murriss, K., Scott, F., Thomsen, B.S., Dixon, K., Giorza, T., Peers, J. & Lawrence, C. (2022). Researching digital inequalities in children's play with technology in South Africa. *Learning, Media and Technology*. 48. 1-14. [10.1080/17439884.2022.2095570](https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2022.2095570)

O'Neill, I.K & Thomsen, B.S. (2024) *Becoming a Playful School* (forthcoming book contribution)

Parker, Rachel & Thomsen, Bo. (2019). Playful integrated pedagogies that foster children's holistic skills development in the primary school classroom. The LEGO Foundation. ISBN: 978-87-999589-6-2.
<https://cms.learningthroughplay.com/media/nihnouvc/learning-through-play-school.pdf>

Parker, R., Thomsen, B.S. & Berry, A. (2022). Learning through Play at School – A Framework for Policy and Practice. *Frontiers in Education*. Volume 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.751801>

Popp, J. & Thomsen, B.S. (2017). A commentary on the importance of father-child play and children's development: Father-Child Play and Children's Development. *Infant Mental Health Journal*. 38. [10.1002/imhj.21681](https://doi.org/10.1002/imhj.21681).

Scott, F., Marsh, J., Murriss, K., Ng'ambi, D., Thomsen, B.S., Bannister, C., Bishop, J., Dixon, K., Giorza, T., Hetherington, A., Lawrence, C., Nutbrown, B., Parry, B., Peers, J. & Scholey, E. (2023). An ecological perspective on children's play with digital technologies in South Africa and the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Play*, Bind 12, Page 349-374.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21594937.2023.2235466>

Thomsen, B.S. (2008) Performative Environments: Architecture Acting with Flows, *Architectural Theory Review*, 13:3, 320-336, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13264820802488283>

Thomsen, B.S. (2023) *Reforming teacher education towards playful learning* in Lindley, P. (2023). *Raising the Nation – How to build a better future for our children*. Policy Press. ISBN: 978-1447366478

Thomsen, B. S., & Jensen, O. B. (2008). Performative Urban Architecture: place-making in-between architecture and socio-technical systems. Paper presented at Association of American Geographers 2008 Annual Meeting, Boston, United States.
https://vbn.aau.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/17418003/AAG_2008_Thomsen_and_Jensen.pdf

Wright, C.A., Hirsh-Pasek, K. & Thomsen, B.S. (2022). Playful Learning and Joyful Parenting. The LEGO Foundation.
https://cms.learningthroughplay.com/media/psybkjisc/report_playful-learning-and-joyful-parenting.pdf

Selected presentations, articles, and podcasts:

2023 / 11 – Presentation and keynote: Danish Centre for Education Environment
Play for Well-being and Belonging

2023 / 11 – Presentation and moderation: Yidan Education Forum, Shenzhen
The role of AI in the Future of Education

2023 / 10 – Webinar: OECD Social and Emotional Learning
[Report Launch: Philanthropy for social and emotional learning - YouTube](#)

2023 / 10 – Presentation: Symposium for Danish Hospitals
The role of play for children in hospitals - <https://www.boernesymposium.dk/>

2023 / 10 – Presentation: LEGO Serious Play International Conference

2023 / 09 – Presentation and panel: World50 Corporate Network, New York

2023 / 09 – Panel: Children’s Global Assembly 2023 panel with young people
<https://capitalofchildren.com/assembly/>

2023 / 09 – Presentation: Keynote at ACER Research Conference, Sydney
<https://www.researchconference.com.au/news/play-the-way-to-motivate-teachers-and-students>

2023 / 08 – Interview: Medium & Bootcamp, Designing for Children
<https://bootcamp.uxdesign.cc/what-good-childrens-design-entails-73e3b2398c6f>
<https://bootcamp.uxdesign.cc/why-childrens-design-is-a-promising-space-for-top-talent-472e1865a4c4>

2023 / 07 – Webinar: UNESCO, Happy Schools
[Happy to learn: Promoting happiness in school processes - YouTube](#)

2023 / 07 – Presentation: Scratch Conference 2023 – Sparking Creative Connections
<https://www.scratchfoundation.org/scratch-conference>

2023 / 06 – Presentation: Keynote, UNICEF International Conference on Early Childhood Education and Care, Georgia

2023 / 06 – Podcast: Live session at the Danish Public Meetings / Folkemødet Bornholm
[Live fra Folkemødet: Legende skole-hjem-samarbejde med børnene i fokus - Spørg om skolebørn | Podcast on Spotify](#)

2023 / 06 – Webinar: OECD Seminar – Education Policies supporting Student Creativity
[How are education policies supporting students to think creatively? | Creative thinking is consistently named among the top skills that employers are looking for. But OECD research suggests that creativity in students drops... | By OECD Education and Skills - Facebook | Facebook](#)

2023 / 06 – Interview: Paragon One Impact Report - CSR Innovators and Change Makers
<https://www.paragonone.com/post/bo-stjerne-thomsen-lego-foundation>

2023 / 05 – Article: World Economic Forum – How AI can transform education for students and teachers
[How AI can transform education for students and teachers | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

2023 / 05 – Presentation: World Bank – Learning to Read through Play
Arabic literacy in MENA

2023 / 04 – Interview: Road Trip Nation – young people finding careers that matters
<https://www.roadtripnation.com/leader/bo-stjerne-thomsen>

2023 / 04 – Webinar: Grantmakers for Education
Redefining Student Assessment for Lifelong Success
[Capturing What Matters: Redefining Student Assessment for Lifelong Success - Grantmakers For Education \(edfunders.org\)](#)

2023 / 03 – Presentation and Panel: SxSW, Austin
K12 Assessments of the future & Developing and Assessing Creative Skills

2023 / 03 – Article: EdTechX – Designing for Digital Well-Being
<https://medium.com/edtechx360/designing-for-digital-well-being-c48efbf3f991>

2023 / 03 – Presentation: International Playful Learning Conference
Making Assessments Meaningful and Joyful
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yno-92E0HHU>

2022 / 11 – Presentation and panel: UNESCO, World Conference on ECC & Education Investments
<https://events.unesco.org/event?id=3323535829>

2022 / 10 – Presentation and Panel: The Economist Metaverse conference, San Francisco
Play, create and learn: a youth perspective on digital

2022 / 09 – Presentations and Panels: UN General Assembly sessions
Future of Digital Credentials

2022 / 08 – Podcast: The Real Play City - How cities can overcome challenges by playful placemaking
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pdjxa4_FDY

2022 / 08 – Podcast: Innovating EdTech - Sparking Imagination & The Relationship Between Play and Learning
<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/innovating-edtech/episodes/Sparking-Imagination--The-Relationship-Between-Play-And-Learning-With-LEGOs-Bo-Stjerne-Thomsen-e1mb0vv/a-a8c6fdu>

2022 / 06 – Presentation and Panel: ISTE, New Orleans
EdTech for the Whole Child

2022 / 06 – Presentation: EdTechX summit, London
The Importance of Fun in Learning to Drive Outcomes

2022 / 05 – Article: World Economic Forum - Investing in education could add \$2.54 trillion to the global economy: 'Playful learning' is key
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/future-of-education-playful-learning/>

2022 / 05 – Podcast: Learning through play in the Metaverse and the Natural World
<https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/learning-through-play-in-the-metaverse-and-the/id1510971800?i=1000559315136>

2022 / 05 – Presentation: World Economic Forum, Education 4.0
Education in time of crisis / Digital Well-Being for Youth

2022 / 05 – Podcast: Early Childhood Play - Buttercup
<https://fountain.fm/episode/zYvluBHQEaRQhXmm9II/> / <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XM06Ylyhlw>

2022 / 04 – Panel and workshop: ASU/GSV, San Diego
Big Picture Learning – Education based on competency-based assessments

2022 / 03 – Panel: SxSW, Reinventing Schools

2022 / 02 – Podcast: The Art of Teaching and the Power of Play
<https://theartofteaching.podbean.com/e/dr-bostjerne-thomsen-chair-of-learningthrough-play-and-vice-president-atthelegofoundationthepower-ofplayand-why-hebuilt-a-housewitha-tree-inside-of-it/>

2021 / 09 – Presentation: OECD International Education Conference from South Korea
[2021 Korea-OECD International Education Conference\(Eng\) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2021-Korea-OECD-International-Education-Conference(Eng)-YouTube)

2021 / 12 – Webinar: OECD Education and Skills– To Play or to Learn
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=305952414730043

2021 / 10 - Podcast: The Building Blocks of Playing to Learn – Kide science
<https://pod.link/childsplay/episode/6e478e20a26b7208b618ff35d3ee4f64>

2021 / 10 – Podcast: The Power of Play, Chat about Children, Australia
<https://soniabestulic.com.au/chatabout-children-podcast/episode-74-the-power-of-play-with-dr-bo-stjerne-thomsen/>

2021 / 09 – Webinar: Reimagining Learning in Everyday Spaces, Too small to fail summit
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl4Agzd_loA

2021 / 06 – LinkedIn Webinar - Play to cope with change: How play can support children’s social-emotional learning
<https://www.linkedin.com/video/live/urn:li:ugcPost:6790899431622356992/>

2021 / 05 – Article: World Economic Forum - Learning through play represents the best long-term value for helping kids, regardless of background
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/03/learning-through-play-represents-the-best-long-term-value-for-helping-children-regardless-of-background/>

2021 / 05 – Article: Hechinger Report: Twenty-six studies point to more play for young children
<https://hechingerreport.org/twenty-six-studies-point-to-more-play-for-young-children/>

2021 / 05 – Podcast: Learning through play, may be what we all need right now
<https://classdismissedpodcast.com/k12/learning-through-play-may-be-what-we-all-need-right-now/>
[Learning through play, may be what we all need right now - Class Dismissed Podcast](#)

2021 / 04 – Article: World Economic Forum – How playing can help you succeed at work
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/04/how-playing-can-help-you-succeed-at-work/>

2021 / 03 – Presentation: IATED Talks – Reimagining Learning with Technologies
https://iated.org/talks/Thomsen_Lego

2020 / 12 – Article: WISE blog post – The Future of Learning is in Your Community
<https://www.wise-qatar.org/the-future-of-learning-is-in-your-community/>

2020 / 12 – Article: Digital Futures Commission Interview
<https://digitalfuturescommission.org.uk/blog/interview-with-dr-bo-stjerne-thomsen/>

2020/11 – Facebook webinar - New Paradigms for Learning - Building blocks for the future
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=689867641917720

2020 / 11 – Podcast: Are we forgetting how to play?
<https://lookbothways.kinandcarta.com/9-importance-of-play/>
[Ep.9 Are We Forgetting How to Play? - Look Both Ways \(kinandcarta.com\)](#)

2020 / 10 – Spotify Podcast – EdShow on Learning through Play
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1q0feHtLXkudr0il6H712U>
[Learning Through Play with Bo Stjerne Thomsen | TEDS 14 - The ED Show | Podcast on Spotify](#)

2020 / 08 – Article: OECD Forum – Post-pandemic Pedagogy: Using Digital Learning to Boost Well-being and Creativity in Children
<https://www.oecd-forum.org/posts/post-pandemic-pedagogy-using-digital-learning-to-boost-well-being-and-creativity-in-children>

2020 / 08 – Article: WISE blog post – Do children need to go ‘back to school’?
<https://www.wise-qatar.org/do-children-need-to-go-back-to-school/>

2020 / 08 - Podcast: WISE Innovation Summit - Learning through Play in Schools
[Learning Through Play in Schools with Bo Stjerne Thomsen - WISE \(wise-qatar.org\)](#)

2020 / 06 – Article: Joan Ganz Cooney Centre, The Future of Play
<https://joanganzcooneycenter.org/2020/05/06/bo-stjerne-thomsen/>

2020 / 06 - Podcast: The role of technology for play and learning - Dubit part 2
<https://soundcloud.com/user-648360783/dubit-coffee-break-bo-stjerne-thomsen-part-2>

2020 / 05 – Podcast: The role of technology for play and learning – Dubit part 1
<https://soundcloud.com/user-648360783/dubit-coffee-break-bo-stjerne-thomsen-part-1>

2020 / 05 – Webinar: Learning Inspired with Rosan Bosch
<https://rosanbosch.com/en/journal/learning-inspired-bo-stjerne-thomsen-learning-through-playful-experiences>